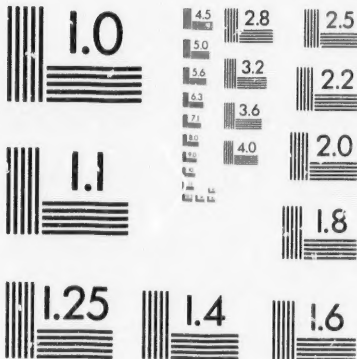


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LECTURE

ON THE

SECOND ADVENT,

BY THE

REV. R. FAIRBAIRN, B. A.,

ORO.



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LECTURE
ON THE
Second Coming of Our Lord
—BY—
REV. R. FAIRBAIRN, B. A., ORO

The occasion which led to the delivering of this Lecture was the previous delivery of one on the same subject by an itinerant lecturer, advancing the view that Christ's Second Coming had already taken place. This together with the Pre-millennial views held by others, led to a close investigation of the Scriptures on the subject, which resulted in the views embodied in this Lecture.

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THE subject of the second coming of our Lord is one of great importance, and what is rendering it more so at the present time is the fact that it is engaging the attention and occupying the time of quite a number of people. These circumstances have given rise, as we might have expected, to several conflicting views, thereby tending to unsettle the old belief, it may be of some, or even leading others into error, and placing the vast majority in a position in which, although they may not believe the opinions advanced, yet they may not be able to answer the arguments of their opponents. On such a subject, therefore, it is of vast importance that we understand the Scriptures aright so far as they are clear and explicit, and where we are not sure of the meaning of Scripture, it becomes us to be somewhat modest and diffident. But where we have the "Thus saith the Lord" as our authority, it becomes us neither to be doubtful nor hesitating. There are two views of the Second Advent which I feel persuaded upon close investigation have not the Scripture taken in its general tenor or scope to sustain them. The 1st is that Christ has already come the 2nd time, and that being here amongst us now he will not come again, or that he came invisibly at the destruction of Jerusalem. The 2nd is that he will come at the beginning of the Millennium and reign personally with his saints a thousand years. This is called the premillennarian view. To refute both of these views might seem to require a fuller exposition of Scripture than one lecture, but as the arguments against the 2nd, showing that Christ will not come till after the millennium, imply that the first view is wrong also, since if it can be shown that Christ will not come till the end of the present order of things, then it follows that he has not yet come personally. Therefore the argument against the second view refutes the first also, because by proving that he will come personally at the general resurrection and final judgment, it follows that he has not yet come personally.

In treating on Christ's coming and his presence amongst us there are some distinctions which appear to me to be lost sight of by some the failure to make such distinctions resulting in error. There is his essential presence, his spiritual presence, his personal

or corporeal presence. Christ being God is essentially present everywhere, is spiritually present in the manifestation of his power in judgement or mercy, but is corporeally or personally present in Heaven. In reference to the latter Luke says in Acts, III., 21.—“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things.” In reference to his spiritual presence Christ himself said to his Disciples, “I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;” and in reference to his essential presence the Psalmist, in the cxxxix Psalm, at 7th verse, says, “Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?” It is a mistake, therefore, to explain away the personal advent by reference to the spiritual, or the spiritual by reference to the personal.

The coming of Christ is mentioned frequently in the Word of God, and we must ascertain from the terms used and from the whole scope of the passage whether it is the spiritual manifestation of his power in judgement or mercy, or his personal coming that is meant. When about to leave his disciples who were grieved at the prospect of his absence, and did not understand how he could be spiritually present with them though bodily absent, He says to them “I will not leave you comfortless, (orphans), I will come to you.”—John xiv., 18. The whole context shows that he meant his spiritual manifestation—the 21st, 22nd and 23rd verses especially show it. “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him.” Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot) “Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world.” Jesus answered and said unto him: If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him. When it is said therefore that Christ is amongst us and will not come again, it is in one sense true but not in another; spiritually it is true, for the Spirit the Comforter is to abide with us forever; but with reference to Christ’s second personal coming it is wrong, as will be shown. Again, the coming of Christ is mentioned in Rev. II. 16. “Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth;” where it clearly denotes the spiritual manifestations of his power by way of judgement. Again the destruction of the Apostacy mentioned in II Thes. II. 2, is to take place by the manifestations of his power—verse 8—Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

The day of the Lord is an expression often used in the Word of God. It frequently denotes the day of the Lord’s vengeance.—Isaiah, xxxiv., 5, “For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; be-

hold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment." It was the day of the Lord when his Angel slew Sennacherib's army and scattered all the corpses of that great host over the face of the earth. Again, with reference to Christ's coming to John the explanation is easy, and is furnished by the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke. Christ having signified to Peter by what death he (Peter) should glorify God, Peter was led to enquire concerning John. He saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. In the first place it is not said that John lived till Christ's coming—the language is hypothetical; but we know that John did live till after the destruction of Jerusalem and the inauguration of the present dispensation. But in this case what our Saviour said in reference to others will apply also to John, and shows how it is to be taken. Matthew xvi. 28,—“Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. We read that he spake these words to his disciples; but it matters not whether John were present or not, or referred to or not. The principal is all the same. The language here refers no doubt to the destruction of Jerusalem and the manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ by the annihilation of the Jewish polity.—But this by no means exhausts the meaning but was a type and earnest of the final coming of Christ and of the destruction of the wicked; this language does not refer to Christ's ultimate and glorious coming, for this was hidden from himself as man. Alford says “Our Lord in his humanity in the flesh did not know the day and the hour, and that not knowing it he should have uttered a determinate and solemn prophecy of it, is impossible.” Mark ix., 1, “And he said unto them, verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power. Luke ix., 27—But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Kingdom of God; which latter passages clearly denote the manifestation of Christ's Kingdom. The reference is to the establishment and progress in the life time of some then present of that new Kingdom of Christ which was destined to work the greatest of all changes, and be the grand pledge of his final coming in glory. There are also some passages that can only be explained satisfactorily by this principle.

In the above explanation we have referred to a principle which must not be overlooked in interpreting prophecy. This principle is that one prophecy often contains within its bosom reference to another prophecy that meets its complete fulfilment in the distant future, and receives a partial fulfilment in the near or

immediate future. In Isaiah chap. 7, we have a plain instance of this double reference. The Lord gives Ahaz a sign that the King of Syria and the King of Israel who had entered into a confederacy would not prevail against Judah so as to carry out their design;—verse 14: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”—verse 16: “For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land which thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her Kings.” Without entering into a minute and detailed account of this passage, it is clear that there is a double sign. Language is used such as, whilst partially applicable to the immediate event, receives its exhaustive accomplishment in reference to the Messiah. The Hebrew () and the Septuagint and the Greek in Matt. i., 23rd, () have the article *the* virgin, and refers to some definite one known to the speaker and his hearers, at that time a virgin, about immediately to become the prophet's second wife, (see Fausset) and bear a child whose name Shear-jashub—Isaiah. vii., 3,— () signifying a remnant shall return, was a standing memorial to Ahaz and the Jews that the nation should not utterly be destroyed.—(See also chap. viii., v. 3 & 4), and whose attainment to the age of discrimination (about 3 years) should be preceded by the deliverance of Judah from its two invaders. Without going further into detail, Syria and Samaria regarded as one, just two years after this prophecy lost both their Kings, as verse 16 foretells.—See II. Kings, xv. 30, and x., 9. The temporary fulfilment in this case is an adaption of remote and distant prophecy referring to the Messiah to the immediate event; but the immediate event foreshadows typically the great central end of prophecy Jesus Christ. The inspired authority of Matt. i., 22, 23, decides the Messianic reference. “Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet; behold the virgin (see Greek) shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Immanuel.” And even this remote and distant fulfilment was to be a sign to Ahaz, for he was not to be destroyed, as the Messiah was to be horn of his nation and family. Now the same principle must certainly be applied to the xxiv. chap. of Matthew, otherwise all the circumstances attending the coming of Christ enumerated there, cannot be explained. There are various ways of explaining the 3rd verse of that chapter. It may contain three separate questions: 1st, (a) “Tell us when shall these things be?” referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, and more particularly to the Temple, (b) and what shall be the sign of thy coming and of (c) the end of the world? 2nd, That the whole of our Lord's discourse refers to but one question, viz:—“When was Jerusalem to be destroyed and Christ's Kingdom in-

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augurated." 3rd, This adopts what may be called the double sense of prophecy. It is very evident that the second which refers the whole of our Lord's discourse exclusively to the overthrow of the Jewish polity and establishment of Christ's Kingdom is untenable, because it does not explain all the circumstances or conditions mentioned in the chapter, especially the 30th and 31st verses: "And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." This surely denotes the opposite of invisibility. But even the avowal that he has come invisibly proves that he came spiritually, and not personally when he destroyed Jerusalem, overthrowing the Jewish polity, and set up his spiritual and invisible kingdom in this world; for when he comes personally he is to come visibly, "every eye shall see him." The 30th and 31st verses show that the second mode does not exhaust the full meaning of the clause—the end of the world," i. e., that it is not to be restricted to the end of the Jewish polity; it includes but does not exhaust it. We are therefore shut up to the first or third of the above modes of interpreting the passage, either of which satisfies all the conditions of the chapter; and although it is possible that in the mind of the disciples the three questions may have been regarded as one associating the three together, or viewing them as occurring contemporaneously, yet in the mind of Christ the end of the world, as the whole scope of the passage shows, was not limited to the end of the Jewish polity.—

Age may

be applied to the christian dispensation as well as the Jewish; many instances of a more remote reference than the immediate are given in the Scriptures—Matt. xxiv., 30. That this language finds its highest interpretation in the second personal coming of Christ is certain; but whether this is the primary sense here or not is another question. By examining Daniel vii., 9 and 10 with 13, we find from preceding verses that the powers which persecuted the church (symbolized by beasts) are summoned to the Bar of God. The judgment is set. Now nothing is clearer than that primarily this is not the final judgment, but is a description of a vast temporal judgment on men for their hostility to the Church of God,—yet in its highest interpretation it must refer to the general judgment. But though something like this appears to be the primary sense of Mat. xxiv., 31, in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet no one can fail to see that the language swells beyond any gathering of the human family into a church upon earth, and forces the thoughts onward to the gathering of the Church at the last trumpet to meet the Lord in the air, which is to wind up the present scene. Towards the close of Matt. xxiv., as well as Mark xiii., as our Lord ap-

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proaches the crisis of vengeance in Jerusalem and redemption to his church, the analogy between that and the final judgment and complete deliverance of his people becomes more striking and clear; but it swells out and extends far beyond any temporal vengeance and partial deliverance till we are ushered into the final closing scene. The last mode or the principle of the double meaning of prophecy satisfies all the conditions of the chapter, and is borne out by the analogy of other prophecies. Thus the great prediction of the deliverance of the Jews from captivity in Babylon is set forth in language which will equally apply to the great redemption by the Messiah. Prophecy, therefore, takes in the whole scope of God's dealing with his people so as to make it doubtful what refers to the deliverance from Babylon, and what to the Messiah. There is a blending together of different events, the one often foreshadowing or typifying the other. This prophecy is therefore to be regarded as embodying the whole history of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, and the final and general judgment and the end of the present order of things. Thus everything predicted of the final judgment and end of the world, had its counterpart in what was fulfilled in that generation. The frequent language of prophecy is used throughout the Scripture in which various fulfilments are involved; and what seems to settle the point that the end of the world meant more than the end of the Jewish polity is the assertion in Mark xiii., 32,—“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, neither the Son, but the Father.” With regard to the 34th verse of this xxiv. chap. of Matthew—“This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.” The word for generation () has in Hellenistic Greek (says Alford) the meaning of a race or family of people. (See Jer. viii., 3) In Septuagint, Matt. xiii., 45—“Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first, even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” Here the meaning absolutely requires this sense; so also in Luke xvi., 8—“And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely; for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.” In all these places the Greek word nearly equals race, having even a more pregnant meaning, implying that the character of one generation stamps itself upon the race.—*Alford*. Therefore, our Saviour said in the 34th verse “That the race of the Jews should not become extinct before the end of the present order of things”—the end of the world as commonly understood. The next verse carries the prophecy on to the end of all things, showing that it is not limited to the end of the Jewish polity—“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Moreover the ancient christians did

expect the Lord's coming after that generation had passed away.—The word generation in verse 34 () had even a double reference also : 1st, To the end of the Jewish polity. 2nd, To the end of all things. Christ's coming therefore in the xxiv. chapter while it is applicable to the end of the Jewish polity and the establishment of his kingdom, is also applicable to the end of the present order of things, *i. e.* the end of the world and the final reception of all his people to himself. The avowal that he came invisibly in the first case proves that he came spiritually as he said he would to his disciples when he promised saying, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," &c., and "Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." His own assertion shows that he will yet come both visibly and personally in the latter case, "and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

III. The Scriptures assert there is yet to be a second personal advent. From the analogy of prophecy before his first coming with prophecy after his coming we are led to expect this.

The Jews had the same ground for believing in a visible and personal coming from their prophecy as we have from ours; and they would have had the same reasons for explaining away the personal and resolving it into the spiritual as we have for doing so. The two personal comings are contrasted, implying that as the one is personal so likewise will the other be personal and visible. Hebrews ix., 28,—“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many : and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” He is to appear (be seen) to them that look for him. Surely this implies personality and visibility. That his personal coming is yet in the future appears from Acts iii. 21, “Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things. This is not to be explained away by saying they are the times before the restitution but plainly point to the restoration () of all things to their original perfect condition, as De Wette says, “die Wiederherstellung in ihren frühern vollkommern Zustand.” That we are not to be stumbled by the word times as denoting a lengthened process, is clear from 1. Peter, i., 20—“Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world but was manifest in these last times for you.” This cannot mean therefore the lengthened process while all things are being restored but it is the definite and completed restoration itself that is meant at which Christ is to come personally, and till then the heavens receive him. The rectification of all the evils and disorders of the fall is meant, and the interval until that consummation, (Bengel) includes the whole period between the ascension of Christ and his

second coming in glory. And we cannot but remark what a beautiful analogy we have between the establishment of the christian dispensation, and the complete restoration of all things. As Christ came spiritually and set up the one, and is reigning now spiritually, so he will come personally at the latter, and all things will be made subject unto him, and he will be all in all. Ephesians i., 10,—“That in the dispensation of the fulness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him.” Again, in Acts, i., 11,—“This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” The clause this same Jesus most certainly implies his corporeal identity—he shall come with the same body with which they saw him ascend. The ‘clause so come in like manner as ye have seen him go (going in Greek) into heaven,’ implies that as they saw him going they shall see him coming. This is certainly the fair inference to draw from this verse; moreover special attention is drawn to it by the emphatic and expressive language used. Two phrases are used to express the close analogy between the manner of his departure and that of his return, these are “shall so come”

“and in like manner”

he shall therefore come personally and visibly. The very gist and reason of the address lies in this: By his personal and visible coming again, the angels; meant to allay their sorrow at his departure and comfort them by the expectancy of a similar return. That the disciples understood it in this way is clear from the effect produced: “they returned to Jerusalem with great joy”—Luke xxiv., 52.—A state of constant watchfulness and expectancy was thus produced which state is not meant to be transitory, but for our spiritual benefit is meant to continue. Living or taken away from the present scene by death it matters not, we shall all see Christ, and for this we are enjoined to watch and be ready, “What I say unto you I say unto all, watch.” So that it is not so much death we are to prepare for in this view of the case, as the return of Christ, which as christians with joyful expectancy it behooves us all to look forward to as the great event, and to be preparing for it. “He that hath his hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.” Bengel says:—“Inter ascensionem et inter adventum gloriosum nullus interponitur eventus eorum utrique par: ideo hi duo conjunguntur Merito igitur Apostoli ante datam Apocalypsin diem Christi ut valde propinquum proposuerunt—Et congruit majestate Christi ut toto inter ascensionem et inter adventum tempore sine intermissione expectetur.” Between the ascension and glorious advent no event equal to either of these is interposed; on this account these two are conjoined—Therefore the apostles have justly before the Revelation given, set

forth the day of Christ as very near, and it comports with the majesty of Christ that during the whole time between the ascension and the advent without intermission he should be expected—(looked for.)

It is a very difficult thing to draw the line between that which is to be taken spiritually and that which is to be taken literally. It requires no ordinary sagacity to keep clear of spiritualizing the literal or literalizing the spiritual; both errors are common, and there is danger lest in our anxiety to avoid Charybdis we may fall into Scylla in this respect. But surely it is spiritualizing away the literal to say that the second coming of Christ is invisible in the face of such plain passages as the following:—Matt. xxvi., 66—“Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Matt. xxiv., 30, “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Rev. i., 7—“Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” On the latter passage, every eye shall see him, we remark this does not mean we shall see him in our present unchanged condition, but is to be understood of the whole human race (the dead risen and the living changed) all summoned before him, we in our changed state, *i. e.*, with our resurrection body, shall see him with his glorified body. Philip. iii., 21—“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” And that all this is to be literally fulfilled in our changed state is clear from the following expression: “And they also who pierced him shall see him.” The Word of God describes him as coming in the clouds with power and great glory, personally and visibly, with the glory of his Father, with the holy angels, with the sound of the trumpet, with the voice of the archangel, the dead are to be raised, the living changed, the saints caught up, and the heavens are to pass away with a loud noise, and the elements to melt with fervent heat, the earth and all things that are therein are to be burnt up. All these expressions imply personality and visibility, and the disciples understood it so. II. Thesal., i., 7—“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels. Philip. iii., 20 and 21—“For our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” For this event let us then be preparing; for it let us live in constant expectation, and so doing we will be rendering compliance with our

Lord's injunction, watch. For if living, we shall be changed; if having fallen asleep in Jesus, we shall be raised, and we shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words:

IV.—Prophecy yet to be fulfilled before Christ's personal coming.—The general drift of prophecy leads us to expect the conversion of the Jews, if not their literal restoration to their own land. It is to the effect that after being rebuked for their sins and punished and brought to repentance, they should be restored to their privileges and to the favour of God. Isaiah predicted that for their idolatry and wickedness they should be carried away into captivity, but that a remnant should be restored to their own land and secured in their privileges again. The general tenor of the prophecies in Joel and Zechariah, indeed of all the prophecies in reference to them, is that for the rejection of the Messiah they should be scattered over the face of the earth among all nations, but that God will bring them back and he will not finally withdraw his favour from them. The 11th chapter of Isaiah describes the restoration of the Jews in a spiritual sense, if not in a literal also; and the call of the Gentiles. Zechariah predicts the national conversion of the Jews to faith in him whom they had rejected and crucified. Zech. xii., 10—"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." But the most important passage is in the 11th chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The drift and scope of the chapter is that this rejection of the Jews as a nation, is not entire, but that there is a remnant, according to the election of grace. It is true "He came unto his own (the Jews as a nation), and his own received him not;" but there have always been some who believed in him. The first five verses of the chapter teach this: Verse 1. "God has not entirely cast away his people, otherwise I myself as an Israelite would be excluded." Verse 2. "God has not cast away his people whom he fore-knew."—who his people are whom he foreknew the following verses show. They are those who have not fallen away in the sad spiritual defection of the Jews; as in the times of Elias when the Jews had fallen away from the worship of Jehovah, so now there is a remnant according to the election by grace. Verse 7 "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were hardened." But this fall and rejection of the Jews as it is not total neither is it final; it is a temporary fall, and is the occasioning cause of the bringing in of the Gentiles. Verse 11. "I say then have they stumbled that they should fall? (that is fall not finally for they have

certainly fallen, but it is temporarily), be it not so, () but by their fall salvation (is) unto the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy." This latter clause teaches that the bringing in of the Gentiles is to be the occasioning cause or means of the bringing in again or national restoration of the Jews to faith in Christ. And if such be the glorious effects of their fall upon the Gentiles what may we not expect from their (the Jews) reception and fulness. The Apostle teaches that the national restoration of the Jews, or their in-bringing *en masse* to the true faith will be attended by such a manifestation of the glorious power of God's grace upon the Gentile world, and the prevailing and dominant feeling in regard to spiritual things will be so completely changed that it will be to them as life from the dead." Verse 15. "For if their rejection be the reconciling of the world what then reception but life from the dead." Ezekiel xxxvii. ch., v. 21 to the end. Verse 28—"And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." Also, Ezekiel, xxxviii., 23—"Then will I magnify myself and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." The Apostle towards the close of the chapter goes on to say that this blindness or rather hardness in part () not total, for there are individual Jews who believe in the Messiah has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. By the fulness of the Gentiles in this connection is meant the time of their full enjoyment of gospel privileges, it is fulness not in reference to the salvation of every individual, but of their share of privileges for which the mass of Jews are cut off meanwhile by unbelief; or as it is in Luke, xxi., 24—"Till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Then shall take place the national reception of the Jews of the true faith of the Messiah. Verse 26. "And so all Israel (*en masse*, the body of the Jews at large—Paul is treating of them as a nation) shall be saved."

The object of this seeming digression is to shew that all this must be fulfilled before the second personal coming of Christ, viz:—the national conversion of the Jews and also the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come. That the national conversion of the Jews as above is to precede Christ's coming, is clear. On this point Luthardt says, as our Lord—Matthew xxiii., 39—said: "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord—so it is certain that when Jesus comes, who will be visible to all the world, as the lightning which cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, whom all eyes even of those who pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall see, it is certain the Jews

must have been converted and have become a christian nation.— And further, when Peter exhorts to repentance (Acts III, 19, 21,) and conversion until the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord shall come, so it appears to me beyond all doubt that the conversion of Israel is to precede the second advent of Christ.

Now can anyone say that their conversion took place before the destruction of Jerusalem, the end of the Jewish polity, which according to the first view is the end of the world in Matt. XXIV., 3, at which Christ came. Was the fearful imprecation, "His blood be on us and on our children," removed before the end of the Jewish polity at the destruction of Jerusalem? How could this be when their wickedness was the cause of its destruction? How explain the scattered state of the Jews ever since? and yet the Scriptures tell us the gathering in of the Jews is to precede the second personal coming of Christ. The following passages mean the same. Zechariah, XII., 10—"And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Can we, dare we say that all these gracious promises to Israel have met their ultimate and highest fulfilment when we consider the present deplorable condition and hostile attitude of the Jews to the Messiah. As to whether the Jews are to be restored literally to their own land I would speak in more measured terms, although I think the Scriptures favor this view. Isaiah, XI. chapter seems to teach this, and so likewise Ezekiel XXXVIII., 11, 12, and Ez. XXXIX., 26, 27, and many other passages elsewhere. The land seems to be lying empty awaiting their return, and they themselves are looking towards it with wistful expectation; but be this as it may we will not enter into this subject at present, but at the very least we are assured of their restoration spiritually, and with their restoration the calling of the Gentiles. Their restoration is to be a very effectual means of quickening and more fully restoring the Gentiles. It would appear from Rom. XI. chapter, that the Gentiles will not arrive at that fulness of Gospel privileges and their revivication till the Jews be restored; verse 15—"For if the casting away of them (the Jews) be the reconciling () of the world, what their reception () but life from the dead."

Having therefore previously shown that the Jews are to be restored as a nation, at least in a spiritual way, before the personal coming of Christ, and as this chapter teaches that this is to be the means of bringing in fully the Gentiles, then it will appear that the

latter event is also to precede the personal coming of Christ. But there are other passages which prove this. Matt. xxiv., 14—"And thir gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." We have shown above that although the end of the world may primarily mean the end of the Jewish polity, yet the language swells out till it finds its highest fulfilment in the end of the present order of things.—Granted, therefore, that the gospel was preached in all the known world () for its reception by the Gentiles, and its reception or rejection by the Jews, yet this is not the ultimate fulfilment of the verse, although we admit it was fulfilled primarily; but its primary fulfilment became a type of, and foreshadowed the ultimate and higher fulfilment to the present world. We are justified, therefore, as a church, in considering the commission of our Saviour to his disciples—"Go ye therefore and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as extending to and binding upon us; and we see the church acting upon it. Hence we are driven to the conclusion that the prophecy in Daniel, ii., 34—"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces," signifies the Church of God and its triumphant extension over the world, and is yet to be completely fulfilled before the second personal coming of our Lord; verse 35—"And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth."—That the stone refers to the Messiah and his kingdom is plain from the following passage: Gen. xlix., 54—"But his bow abode in strength and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob," (from thence is the Shepherd the stone of Israel). Psalm cxviii., 22—"The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner." Isaiah xxviii., 16—"Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." Acts, iv., 11—Isaiah, viii., 16—"It was cut out of the mountain without hands," referring to the divine agency and the invisibility of the Spirit's mode of operation. The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. That it is to become a great mountain and fill the whole earth refers to the preaching of the gospel to all nations. Matt. xxiv., 14—"It is to smite the image first."—But the stone had not smitten the image upon his feet at the end of the Jewish polity, for the Roman power symbolized by the legs and feet had not been divided into the ten kings or kingdoms symbolized by the ten toes in Dan. ii., 42, or the ten horns of Daniel, vii. Hence the stone's becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth was to be after the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore the preaching of the gospel to all nations, which it signifies, (Matthew,

xxiv., 14) must find its ultimate fulfilment after, and not before the end of the Jewish polity and the setting up of its kingdom at that time.

It is plain from II. Thes., chap. II., that before the second coming of Christ there was to be a great apostacy or falling away in the church; verse 3—"That day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition." In Paul's time it was not yet revealed but the mystery of iniquity was already working; and when a certain hinderance to its development would be removed that wicked would be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. It is plain its full development was in the future after the end of the Jewish polity, and therefore Christ's coming was to be (II. Thes. II., 8)—after that, as the Apostle says,—“The day of Christ is at hand,” should be “the day of Christ is present”—there being in Scripture a difference between the two in meaning, different Greek words being used. The Scriptures never deny but that in a certain sense the day of the Lord is at hand, and we are to watch and be ready; but the Thes. had taken the notion that it was already present, and this was beginning to interfere with their daily business of life. The Apostle in this chapter dispels the delusion by telling them it would not take place till after the man of sin had been revealed, thus pointing to a period yet in the future.

But who is this man of sin? Whatever power it may refer to it is certainly not applicable to the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem. Its development was after that event in the future.—Paul says, “Having proved this it is not necessary to discuss fully to what power it refers, but the usually received opinion is that the description in this chapter applies to the Papacy, which is Anti-Christ. Dr. Hodge says: “That the common opinion among Protestants is that the prophecies concerning Antichrist have special reference to the Papacy, and that Antichrist does not denote a particular individual but an institution, a power or corporation, and that ecclesiastical, rather than civil, the “man of sin,” the “son of perdition,” having a religious import being more appropriate to the former than the latter.” “His coming is after the working of Satan with all powers and signs and lying wonders.” Civil powers have recourse to diplomatic measures and force to attain to and preserve their power, and these are rather descriptive of the way in which the Papacy has maintained its fearful ascendancy in the world;—Miracles of every possible description they have pretended to have wrought. Its power has been achieved mainly by fraud, “with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” by false pretences, by claiming that Peter was made Primate over the whole Church, and Vicar of Christ on earth, and as such, was superior to all earthly potentates.

It lays claim to the superior authority over the faith of men and decides for them what they must believe. Add to this the false claim to the power to forgive sins, and to alleviate or remit the pains of purgatory. Dr. Taylor remarks on ver. 4—That this power is the opponent of Christ, exalts himself above the civil magistrates, kings and princes, and rulers; was to arise in the church herself, (sitteth in the Temple of God) avow himself to be infallible, lay claim to forgive sins, and possess the key of the gate of paradise, and admit or exclude whomsoever he pleases. No one can ever say this applied to the Jews before the end of their polity. Here we are warranted in saying that the Scriptures teach that the national conversion of the Jews, the triumphant progress of the Kingdom of Christ in the world, and the destruction of Antichrist were to precede the second coming of Christ; but these are in the future, therefore the second personal coming of Christ is yet in the future and not in the past.

V.—The accompaniments of the second personal coming of Christ.—

We know that one of the accompaniments will be the general resurrection—I. Thes., iv., 15, 16, 17, "For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." The scope or design of the Apostle here is to comfort the Thessalonians, that they who have died in Christ shall not on this account be deprived of any advantage at Christ's coming. They shall be raised up, immediately preceding the changing of those who are alive—first the one thing shall take place then immediately the other. Such is the meaning of the Greek particles, () There is no reference whatever to the first resurrection—Rev. xx., 5, 6. The parallel passage is in I. Cor. xv., 51, 52—"Behold I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed." On comparing these two classes of passages it is evident that at the second personal coming of Christ the dead shall be raised and the living shall be changed all simultaneously. Again the general resurrection is to take place at the last day, as Martha speaking of her brother said, (John, xi., 24), "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Our Lord says, (John vi., 39) "It is the Father's will, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day." Again it is said (John, xii., 48) "The Word that I have spoken, the same

shall judge him at the last day." And what is predicted to take place on the last day is elsewhere said to take place when Christ shall appear in his glory, *i. e.*, at the end of the world. Then again, the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked are to take place together—(Dan. xii, 2), "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Again, (John, v., 28) "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Hence the general resurrection, the changing of the living and the second personal coming of Christ take place together at the end of the world, *i. e.*, these are concomitants of the second personal coming of Christ. That the end of the world is a concomitant of the second personal coming of Christ appears plain from Acts, iii., 21, "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things." Again, (1. Cor., xv., 23, 24), "Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end (of world). Again, the final judgment is another concomitant of Christ's second personal coming, II. Thes., i., 7, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God," &c.—Again, (Matt. xxv., 31) "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another," &c. Hence the final judgment, the general resurrection, the changing of the living and the end of the world, are all concomitants of the second personal coming of Christ; and as these have not yet taken place then it follows that Christ has not yet come personally the second time.—This prepares the way for the refutation of the pre-millennarian theory.

VI.—*Refutation of Pre-millennarian Theory.* This theory is that there is to be a literal resurrection, when Christ shall come to reign in person upon the earth a thousand years before the end of the world, and that the risen saints are to dwell here and share with Christ in the glories of his reign. Bearing in mind the concomitants of Christ's second coming, when any one of these concomitants are stated as occurring after the millennium, then the second coming is thereby proven to be after the millennium. Rev. xx., 4—"And I saw thrones, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Some interpret this spiritually, others literally, but in either case it does not affect the argument as verse 5 states that the general resurrection takes place after the thousand years are finished. But the general resurrection is a concomitant of

Christ's second coming, therefore his second coming is after the millennium. Again, v. 11 and 12 describe the final judgment scene which is after the final apostacy, (v. 8) after the millennium. But I have shewn that the final judgment is also a concomitant of Christ's second coming, therefore his second coming is again shewn to be after the millennium. But is there any need to multiply arguments when I have shewn above that his second coming is at the end of the world, (Acts, v., 21—I. Cor., xv., 23, 24) after the final apostacy—(v. 8) and I should state that there are only two personal comings mentioned in the Scriptures, (Heb. ix., 28) "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." That there are only two personal comings, and his second is after the thousand years of peace, precludes the idea of his coming before; that he is yet to come at the general resurrection and final judgment at the end of the present order of things, overthrows the first view at the head of our subject, which was that he had already come.

But the Pre-millennial advent is a Jewish doctrine, at least in so far as it holds that Christ will come and literally sit on the throne of his father David at Jerusalem. This view was the cause of the disappointment and consequent rejection of the Messiah by the Jews. The disciples were tainted with it (Acts, i., 6) "Wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?" was the question asked. It is inconsistent with the nature of Christ's Kingdom, which is spiritual—(John, xviii., 36) "My kingdom is not of this world; If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered of the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." That Christ was to sit on the throne of his father David in a spiritual sense is very clear from Acts, ii., 30, 31, "Therefore being a prophet (David) and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. Hence when Christ arose from the dead and ascended up on high, he sat on the throne of his father David (spiritually). The Lord said unto my Lord, "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool (Ps. cx., 1). Besides all this we are told, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Our bodies as present constituted are not adapted for that state of things which shall exist in the Kingdom of God; we must all be changed. Neither is the spiritual body adapted to our present mode of existence. That our present mode of existence shall continue during the millennium is clear from Rev.,

xx., 8—For Satan is again to deceive the nations after the millenium, and there is to be war before the end of the present order of things; but when the end is to be, when the coming of the Son of Man is to be, no man knoweth. The Scriptures state this emphatically, which should check all presumption, idle curiosity and foolish speculation on the subject. Matt., xxiv., 36—"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Our duty is plainly enjoined upon us, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh."

ERRATUM.—On page 16, sixteenth line from the bottom, the following words have been omitted:—"Indeed any power opposed to Christ is Antichrist."